

Historic, Archive Document

Do not assume content reflects current scientific knowledge, policies, or practices.



1.8
F76YL



YOUR FORESTS -
YOUR FAULT -
YOUR LOSS /

A MESSAGE TO YOU FROM PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT

July 2, 1937.

More than thirty years ago we, as a Nation, began a great battle to save our forest resources.

This battle we are renewing, I am proud to say, over a wide front. Twelve million acres of land unsuited to agriculture have been acquired by the Government since 1933, and will be given a chance to become again a rich domain of useful trees, clear streams, and abundant wildlife. More than a billion seedlings have been set out in areas so completely ruined by cutting and burning that Nature's methods of reforestation had little chance against man's methods of destruction.

Foresters and the men of the CCC are doing their part in the battle to protect and increase our forest wealth, but they are waging a stubborn war against fire. Behind this simple statement there is a tragic story. Nine times out of ten the thing that starts a forest fire is man's carelessness or his indifference. It is hard to believe, but twenty-five per cent of all our forest fires are incendiary in origin. Another twenty-five per cent are caused by smokers. We are destroying our forest wealth through fire alone at the rate of \$51,000,000 a year.

This frightful waste of a vital natural resource can be greatly reduced through the whole-hearted cooperation of our citizens in being careful with fire in the woods and in reporting small fires promptly. I urge you to do your part in helping us keep fire away from our forests.

FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT.

Forestry Merit Badge

The fifth requirement for a Scout Merit Badge in forestry is this: Describe how to fight and stop a surface fire or ground fire if such occurs in a scout's region, and tell the chief causes of forest fires.

This is the way a forest ranger would answer that question:

If the fire has covered only a few square feet and is smoldering, put it out with water. If you can not get water, use sand or clean dirt.

If a fire is spreading in grass and leaves, beat it out with a gunny sack or a wet heavy coat. For a very small fire, branches from a tree may serve in an emergency.

If the fire is in sandy soil, take shovelfuls of sand and throw them along the fire parallel to the burning edge. You can kill down a lot of fire very rapidly by this method.

In mountain regions, the best way is to clear away duff and grass with a shovel and then dig a trench about a foot wide in the clearing. Throw duff and litter from the trench away from the fire. Kill down all the new outbreaks with water or dirt.

The chief causes of fire are: Incendiary, 25 per cent; smokers, 24 per cent; debris burning, 12 per cent; campers, 7 per cent; lightning, 7 per cent; railroads, 4 per cent; lumbering, $1\frac{1}{2}$ per cent.

How to Build a Campfire

1. Scrape away all inflammable material from a spot 5 feet in diameter. Dig a hole in the center of the clear place and build your campfire in this. Never build a campfire against trees or logs or near brush.

2. When you put the campfire out, soak the coals with water and stir them. Drench both sides of small sticks. Wet the ground around the fire. If you can't get water, stir in dirt and tread it down until packed tight over and around the fire. Keep an eye out for hidden sparks.

3. When you throw a match away in the woods, break it in two pieces first.

4. Never break camp until you have cleaned up, and are also sure that your fire is dead out.

5. Never burn slash or brush in windy weather or while there is the slightest danger that the fire will get away.

6. Put out any small fires you can. Report others to the nearest ranger or fire warden or other responsible person.

For assistance in your woodcraft work, write to your State Forester.

LIBRARY
RECEIVED
SEP 27 1937
★ Issued by ★
U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
FOREST SERVICE

In Cooperation With
MINNESOTA DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION